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Lues Venerea & Gonorrhaea

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That law rendering it necessary that every candidate for Medical Honors should furnish a paper on some subject relative to that science to which his life is devoted; has induced me to offer this feeble effort of youthful inexperience; not an expectation that a subject involved in more than Tartarian darkness, a subject which the most penetrating eye of Genius has assailed in vain, would yield to me its arcana —

That lues venerea and gonorrhoea invaded the world at the same time, that neither has existed at any time nor in any country to the exclusion of the other, that they are acquired in the same way, that they originally owed their being to the same causes and that now the same

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poison produces the various forms of gonorrhoea, chancre, bubo, blotches &c. The following pa-
-ges are designed to prove —

The investigation of the original cause of lues Venerea is from its nature subjected to peculiar difficulty; the suspicion that no contact early existed in the minds of those affected by it of the mode of its production operates strongly to induce secrecy —

But from the mode of introduction of other diseases, from the particular systems subject-
-ed to the action of various causes & the various forms of disease resulting from the same cause, we are authorized to form conclusions —

Long experience has afforded sufficient evidence that autumnal fevers are caused

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by marshmiasmata. That the typhus or jail fever is the product of idio miasmata accumulated in confined situations, that scabies and numerous varieties of eruption arise on the skin from inattention to cleanliness; are we not then supported by the most unequivocal & satisfactory analogical evidence in the conclusion that lues venerea in all its forms acquired its existence from inattention to that most essential requisite to our health and beauty, cleanliness, and that it is the offspring of no particular climate, but like the yellow fever coextensive as its cause, that where marshmiasmata is sufficiently powerfull there will be yellow fever, where prostitution becomes a trade & is frequently repeated in the midst of filthiness there will be lues venerea in some of its forms assuming that form which

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the particular force of the cause & the susceptibility of the parts acted on are most favourable to: We have intermitting fever dysentery bilious fever &c from the same cause —

With a view to the illumination of the fact that a certain situation of parts may exist not themselves diseased, yet capable of producing disease in parts brought in contact with them, a fact well adapted to the illustration of the original formation of the disease.

I shall recite a case or two from Mr Hunters treatise on lues venerea —

A married man who had only had communication with his wife for several years, slept with a woman with whom he had formerly cohabited. She gave him a severe gonorrhoea, & declared that

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she was not conscious of being diseased.
He put himself and her under my care; and
while they were going on with their cure they
still continued their intercourse, which
I readily allowed. He got well and it was
supposed she got well also. The intercourse
was continued for many months after,
without any mischief ~~xxxxxx~~ received on
his side, or any suspicion of remaining dis-
- ease on hers —

At last this communication was broken off
and she formed another attachment: she
no sooner formed this new attachment, than
she gave her new lover a gonorrhoea; she now
flew to me for a cure, and declared, that
she had no connection but with the two
gentlemen before mentioned; and then for
that the present disease must be the same

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for which I had attended her formerly. The second lover was not a patient of mine but I gave her medicines which she very much neglected taking. The lover continued his connection as the first had done for several months after he had got well, without any further infection from her; but unfortunately her first lover returned a bout a twelve month after; and thinking himself secure as she lived in peace with the present, renewed his acquaintance with her, and but once, the consequence however was a Gonorrhoea. The case of a young woman from the Magdalen Hospital is particularly in point. she was received into that institution where she remained two years. The moment she came out she was picked up by a person waiting with a post chaise to carry her off.

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In the cases of these women disease did not more exist than does yellow fever or hydrophobia in those who are saturated with the miasmatic poison, or those in whom the hydrophobic cause has not yet produced the active disease —

Had intercourse been had with these women by men equally pregnant with the diseased cause could less than lues venerea have resulted?

Had as in the example furnished by the illustrious Professor of the Institutes & Practice of Medicine in his own case, during the prevalence of the bilious remitting or yellow fever; so completely was his system saturated by the diseased cause that himself observed a very pungent odour arising from his hands; had even a moderate irritant, not to mention an additional dose of the poison acted on

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his system in its thin state would not the fever most undoubtedly have ensued?

Should it be enquired why did not lues venerea make its appearance during a more early period of the world if it depence for its being on filthiness and prostitution? Why did not the luxury and dissipation of the Eastern world give being to it? If the custom of genital ablution which appears at an early period to have pervaded those countries should not be considered as affording a satisfactory explanation: I can only answer that Pandora did not deem it expedient to empty her chest at once. And enquire why did the Plague at certain irregular periods visit most countries of the old world? Why at a recent date did the influenza make such universal sweep thro' our own continent?

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It would seem that the varied operation of millions of causes not only produces in our systems peculiar susceptibilities but also new causes which acting on those susceptibilities give origin to new diseases ——

That lues Venerea and gonorrhœa have neither at any time nor in any country existed to the exclusion of the other is strongly inferred from the fact: that notwithstanding the most assiduous exertion of the most accomplished talents no substantial evidence has been adduced in favour of the opinion. Mr. Benjamin Bell it is true mentions a disease prevailing in the highlands of Scotland under the name of sibbens which he presumes to be lues venerea; but the almost only evidence which he produces in favour of the opinion is the shame of the people affected by it: the same evidence would prove

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Scabies to be lues venerea —

That both forms of the disease are acquired in the same way and frequently at the same time the united testimony of all authors & all observers declares. I shall therefore under this head simply remark that the sameness of their production is no feeble evidence of their identity of cause —

In favour of the opinion that the same poison produces the various forms of gonorrhoea, chancres, bubo, blotches &c. I shall notice the experiments of Mr Hunter —

Two punctures were made on the penis with a lancet dipped in gonorrhoeal matter, inflamation & ulceration ensued first in the prepuce & afterwards in the glans. By touching the ulcerated surfaces with caustic & dressing them with calomel ointment they after sometime healed —

Four months after the chancre on the penis broke out very

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very stimulating applications were tried but seemed not to agree with it, & nothing being applied it healed up. This several times took place but always healed without any application —

While the sores remained on the prepuce & glans a swelling took place in one of the ~~groins~~ glands of the right groin, after the sores were healed mercury was rubbed in on the leg & thigh of the affected side; in a few days the glands subsided to a considerable degree, the mercury was omitted —

After sometime the glands again swelled, a sufficiency of mercury was then rubbed in for its entire reduction —

About two months after the last attack of the bubos a sharp pinkling pain was felt in one of the tonsils on swallowing & on examination a small ulcer discovered, which was permitted to proceed till its nature was discovered; recourse

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was then had to mercury and continued till the ulcer had skinned over, and omitted —

About three months after copper coloured blotches broke out on the skin, & the former ulcer returned on the tonsil. Mercury was again had recourse to; the symptoms disappeared but again returned in the same parts: Mercury was now given with a view to a perfect cure —

The time the experiments occupied from the insertion of the matter till the completion of the cure was about three years —

Here then we have experiments instituted by Mr. Hunter himself & conducted under his own immediate eye, proving as satisfactorily as experiment can prove any thing —

1st That Gonorrhoal matter did produce chancre.

2 That bubo did succeed to the chancre.

3 That ulcerated tonsil with venereal aspect superceded the bubo —

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4th That blotches next appeared.

That all these symptoms were suspended by the partial use of mercury, & finally cured by its more liberal exhibition —

The following case related by Dr. Barton in his M.S. lectures whilst it does honour to his candour affords strong evidence in favour of the opinions I have advanced —

A young man placed himself under the Dr's care with a gonorrhoea which was in a short time suppressed; a venereal inflamation of the throat succeeded this was removed by astringent gargles; when the discharge from the urethra again returned. Astringent injections were again had recourse to with the effect of suspending the discharge: but on its removal the ulcer of the throat again returned & was finally cured by a mercurial salivation —

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taken into consideration; when it is considered also that the opinions of the Dr are repugnant to the unity of the disease, we cannot too much appre-
-ciate the force of evidence furnished by this fact—

I now Gentlemen submit to your examination this effort of juvenility, of excessive anxiety, and of haste; that you will view its errors with the eye of mildness, that Unity will operate more powerfully than rigour is the mirror affording me the brightest prospect for futurity—

Received
March 9th.
1912.